

Message Text

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17

ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 L-02 SP-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 H-02 OES-03 HEW-02

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9504

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TOKYO 5093

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, JA

SUBJ: U S CITRUS: FUNGICIDE

DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE FOR HUME AND FITZSIMMONDS

REF: A) TOKYO 5015: B) TOKYO 4929

1. SUMMARY. AGATT MET 16 APR (A.M.) WITH VAN HORN OF SUNKIST AND SUSAKI OF NISHIMOTO BOEKI (SOLE IMPORTER FOR SUNKIST) AND REVEALED PLANS TO MAKE STRONG PUSH FOR MHW APPROVAL OF OPP AND TBZ AND VAN HORN AGREED FULLY. ALSO SUGGESTED KUNKIST/NISHIMOTO WITHDRAW REQUESTS FOR CUSTOM AND/OR MHW CLEARANCE OF FRUIT NOW AT PORTS(UNLESS THEY CERTAIN IT WILL NOT TEST POSITIVE TO PROHIBTED CHEMICALS) IN ORDE TO AVOID JEOPARDIZING (A) CHANCES FOR SPEEDY MHW APPROVAL OPP AND TBZ, B) SUNKIST IMAGE IN JAPAN, AND (C) LONG RANGE MARKET POTENTIAL.

2. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND LONG DELIBERATION WITH STAFF AGATT CONCLUDED ABOVE ACTION NECESSARY. IN MEETING 16 APR WITH DR ISHIMARU, DIR GEN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH BUREAU, MHW, LEARNED THAT ISHIMARU HAS VERY HIGH OPINION OF ANW MUCH FAITH IN SUNKIST PROMISES. FROM RELIABLE SOURCES WE HAVE LEARNED AND ARE 99 PERCENT SURE THAT OPP AND/OR TBZ WILL SHOW UP ON SHIPMENTS NOW IN QUESTION VIZ., SK 18, SK19, AND AT LEAST PART OF SK 17.

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APPEARS ALMOST CERTAIN TOKYO AND OTHER LOCAL GOVT SANITATION

OFFICES WILL RECHECK FRUIT AT RETAIL LEVEL IN HOPES OF
EMBARRASSING NATIONAL RULING PARTY SHOULD THEY DETECT CHEMICALS
ON FRUIT ALREADY PASSED THRU CUSTOMS. OPPOSITION FACTIONS WILL
THEN BLOW IT UP IN MEDIA, DRIVING MHW TO HARD LINE AND PERHAPS
MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO COOPERATE IN APPROVAL
OF OPP AND TBZ.

3. VAN HORN LISTENED CAREFULLY TO OUR ARGUMENTS, ASKING MANY
QUESTIONS. WE AKED HIM IF THE SHIPMENTS COULD BE DIVIDED
ACCORDING TO PACKING HOUSE NUMBER AND ONLY THE QUOTE
CLEAN UNQUOTE FRUIT LET IN SINCE HE CLAIMS ANY OPP PRESENT IS
THERE BY MISTAKE PROBABLY AT PACKING HOUSE. VAN HORN SAID IF
FRUIT CLEARS PORT AUTHORITIES AND IS TESTED LATER BY LOCAL
GOVT THEY VERY LIKELY TO FIND ILLEGAL CHEMICALS. HE ALSO
STRESSED MORE THAN ONCE QUOTE WE ARE NOT NOW REPEAT NOW
USING THESE CHEMICALS UNQUOTE.

4. THIS IS VERY DIFFICULT DECISION FOR SUNKIST. VAN HORN SAYS
RESHIPMENT MAY MEAN LOSS OF OVER \$1 MILLION DIRECT COSTS TO
SAY NOTHING OF SHORT ITERM MARKET LOST. WE POINTED OUT
COST WOULD BE HIGHER IF FRUIT HAD TO BE PULLED OUT OF
RETAIL/WHOLESALE MARKETS AFTER LOCAL GOVT DETECTION OF
CHEMICALS, BUT THE DECISION IS NOT OURS AND WE ONLY GIVING
OUR HONEST OPINION.

5. RE AIDE MEMOIRE. HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT LAST
PARA PLAN TO CHANGE IT TO READ QUOTE THE APPROVAL
OF THESE FUNGICIDES IS REQUESTED FOR
USE WITH THE PROTECTIVE WAXES NECESSARY FOR PROPER APPLICATION
END QUOTE.

6. MHW VERY LIKELY TO REQUEST WE ALLOW THEM TO STRIKE DIPHENYL
FROM APPROVED LIST IF AND WHEN OPP AND TBZ APPROVED. IF THIS
OKAY WITH U.S. SIDE, WILL HELP MHW IN DEALING WITH FOOD
SANITATION COUNCIL. VAN HORN SAID SUNKIST FULLY SUPPORTS AGATT
DECISION TO PUSH FOR APPROVAL OPP AND TBZ ASAP.
HODGSON

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